

Site History for Management

Procino Plating Inc. and Peninsula Plating Inc., Blades, Delaware

Date: September 5, 2019

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Issue/Topic:

HSCD's Site Assessment Program has been working with the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC), to investigate the impact of groundwater contamination at Procino Plating Inc., and Peninsula Plating Inc., in Blades, Delaware. The State of Delaware and EPA conducted multiple assessments and cleanups due to concerns over metals, and electroplating contamination in the groundwater and residential wells.

Chromium has historically been detected in groundwater beneath the Sites and the have completed a remedial actions through Delaware's voluntary clean-up program (VCP) and EPA's Removal Program. The PA/SI's have identified historical usage and contamination of chemicals at the facility that contained metals and PFOA/PFOS (Fumertol 140). PFAS contamination has been verified in The Town of Blades three public sole source water supply wells. The wells are located approximately 1,300 feet north of the Procino Plating property and 400 feet north of the Peninsula Plating property. EPA completed the SI/HRS in the fall of 2018 to assess the degree of contamination in the area and identify potential sources. DNREC has requested continued EPA assistance with the further investigation and management of the area-wide groundwater plume surrounding the Town of Blades.

Procino Plating - Background and History:

Procino Plating Inc. is an active and operational facility. The company produces manufactured ornamental plating with copper, nickel, chrome; silver and nickel plating for commercial, military use; and fabrication of hard chrome plating of griddle tops since approximately the 1980's.

RCRA

- Procino Plating Inc. received notices of violation from DNREC-SHWMS and USEPA for improper handling of hazardous waste in 1994, 2002, 2007, 2008, and 2009.
- The facility also had unsatisfactory inspections in 2007/2008. The owner indicated that metal plating operations ceased at the facility in 2007. The facility continues to fabricate metal products and templates, but no longer did plating.
- In 2008, Sussex County modified Procino Plating's industrial user permit to specifically prohibit the discharge of waste water generated as a result of electroplating operations.
- From June 2009 through March 2010, the owner for Procino Plating illegally processed, through its wastewater treatment plant, stored drums of chemicals which were left over from its former electroplating operations and, in violation of its now modified Clean Water Act mandated permit, discharged resulting wastewater to the Seaford treatment plant.

Removal Investigation

- Due to ongoing issues at the facility, in 2008 EPA's Superfund Emergency Response requested support from EPA's Criminal Investigation Division in 2009, and then Superfund's Site Assessment Division in 2010 to perform investigations.
- On October 2, 2008 EPA's OSC and DNREC toured the facility in order to evaluate the Site. The OSC and DNREC observed a large number of unlabeled and unidentified containers of hazardous substances, incompatible materials, leaks, spills, and poor house-keeping that posed a threat to human health.

Criminal Investigation

EPA initiated a Federal criminal investigation for hazardous waste storage and wastewater treatment permit violations in 2010. In May 2010, EPA exercised a search warrant and seized the company records and

took samples. These actions and the follow up investigation conducted by the USEPA led to criminal charges against Procino Plating.

- On October 15, 2013, the owner entered a guilty plea as a private individual. The owner was sentenced on February 27, 2014 to one-year probation, a \$50,000 fine, and a \$100 special assessment for one count of illegal storage of hazardous waste without a permit.
- On October 15, 2013, as the owner/operator of Procino Plating, Inc. (Procino Plating), Procino entered a guilty plea on behalf of that corporation to one count of violating the Clean Water Act. Procino was sentenced to five years' probation and a \$400 special assessment.

Superfund Preliminary Assessment/Site Investigation

- Due to ongoing site contamination, EPA/DNREC-SIRS conducted a Preliminary Assessment and Site Inspection of the property in 2010/2011. During DNREC's investigations, chromium was detected in groundwater beneath the facility and offsite locations at concentrations exceeding applicable regulatory criteria. A total of 12 private water supply wells surrounding the site were sampled for metals, VOCs, PCBs and pesticides and in addition 13 borings and 6 monitoring wells were installed.
- After the initial PA/SI, EPA deferred the site to DNREC for priority cleanup.
- In January 2018, DNREC/DHSS under cooperative agreement with EPA sampled the three public wells and identified PFAS's in the municipal wells above the health advisory levels.

Voluntary Clean-up Program

- Procino Enterprises Inc. joined DNREC's Voluntary Cleanup Program (VCP) in 2011 to conduct a Remedial Investigation (RI) at the Site in order to determine the extent of chromium impact to groundwater.
- In July 2015, as part of the removal action, approximately 14 tons of chromium-impacted soil was removed from the suspected source area inside the Procino Plating building and was transported to a permitted facility for disposal.
- DNREC received the consultant's Remedial Investigation (RI) Report in April 2016 which characterized the chromium contamination. As part of the RI, 27 soil samples and 12 new monitoring wells were installed to evaluate the contamination onsite.
- In May 2016, EPA's Site Assessment Manager reviewed the previous documentation and noted the presence of the chemical Fumetrol 140 on containers in the facility in site photographs in the PA and SI reports. This compound is known to contain PFOA/PFOS and when released may have become comingled with the chromium plume. EPA notified DNREC of this new finding. In response, in November 2016, DNREC requested DHSS to sample offsite public and private wells for the presence of PFOA/PFOS. The municipal and residential wells have been sampled for PFC's.
- DNREC issued public notice of the Final Proposed Plan for the RI for the Procino Plating Site on July 24, 2016. There were no comments or questions from the public regarding the Proposed Plan and the remediation will proceed for remediation of only the metals contamination.
- The Procino Plating facility has issued the final RI report and has indicated they have no further remediation and request DNREC close the site despite contamination remaining on the site.

Peninsula Plating Inc. - Background and History:

Peninsula Plating Inc. is an inactive plating facility that operated ornamental plating with copper, nickel, chrome, silver, nickel, cadmium plating for commercial use; and fabrication. Hard chrome plating of griddle tops from approximately 1992 to June 30, 1995. Chemical storage in the buildings with leaking drums, large open top tanks, and containers. The company is dissolved, and the buildings onsite have been razed.

Site Actions

- In 1995 the Fire Chief requested DNREC/EPA assistance because the Peninsula Plating was abandoned and had violated EPCRA and had a series of noncompliance with industrial permitting. This prompted an emergency investigation in 1995. DNREC gained a search warrant to go onto the property to perform an assessment. The EPA OSC was alerted and inspected the facility to determine imminent threats.

- The facility had a discharge permit issued by Sussex County, which was revoked (NOV) by DNREC on May 30, 1995. Contamination may have been disposed of in onsite drains and septic system.
- Due to apparent threats from onsite contamination an Emergency Removal Action was performed to address bulk contamination and surface soils (August 1995 to December 1995).
- Due to indications of migrating contamination EPA performed a Site Inspection (1996, 1999)
- The Site was NFRAP'd in 1996 after the Removal Assessment/Action were completed.
 - The wastes and soils were addressed but groundwater was not.
- Brownfield Redevelopment (2006-2007), Multiple leaking Tanks Removed and soils disposed (2007)
- State deferred, VCP- RI/FS (2006-2007) incomplete. The owners did not perform a site investigation.
- Site closed in 2010, Brownfield failed no remediation or development occurred. Site abandoned by the owners.

Direction/Decisions:

- Three municipal wells and seven residential wells have been identified by DNREC as containing PFAS above the HAL and metals contamination in observation wells above the MCL.
- The potential source areas are the Procino Plating Inc. and Peninsula facilities. However, the PA/SI assessments were EPA's initial screening process to define the potential extent of the plume and the effect on the drinking water nearby. Additional investigations for electroplating contamination are required in the groundwater based on historical information, PA/SI sampling data of the metal's plumes, the past enforcement, removal, VCP, and RCRA histories.
- EPA's SAM recommended the site proceed through the National Priorities Listing process (NPL) due to the unknown extent of the plume, complex hydrogeology, and affects to the sole source drinking water aquifer at the Site.

Political Interest (local/state/federal):

- The Town of Blades has requested a public information session to discuss EPA's samples results from the SI investigation for the winter of 2019.
- The NPL is scheduled for October 24, 2019. EPA will have a public meeting to discuss the NPL listing 60 days after the proposal date.

Follow-up:

- DNREC has requested EPA continued support with the Blades Groundwater Site. The State of Delaware on October 30, 2019 concurred with listing the site to the NPL due to the ongoing threat to human health and the environment and the absence of a remediation plan for the identified source areas.